

Philippians 1:12-14 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

- **Paul had always wanted to go to Rome to preach the gospel (Acts 19:21, Romans 1:15).**
- **However, he expected to go as a PREACHER, not a PRISONER.**
- **STORY:** illegal arrest in the temple in Jerusalem; prisoner in Caesarea for two years; appealed to Caesar; shipwreck on way to Rome; three months of waiting on Island of Malta; under house arrest
- **Paul was not discouraged, because he knew afflictions were part of the life of a Christian**
2 Timothy 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.
1 Thessalonians 3:3-4 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.
Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;
Philippians 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;
- **Paul's experiences contradict the "prosperity gospel" preached in the church recently!**
Acts 20:22-24 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.
2 Corinthians 11:23-28 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.
- **Every affliction we suffer is an investment that God is making in us!**
- **If the Lord did not permit troubles in our lives, that would be the worst form of rejection!**
- **Some Christians forever stay in kindergarten, where the tests are easier to endure!**
Hebrews 12:5-7 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
Psalms 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.
- **God will use afflictions to bring us out into "a place of abundant fruitfulness."**
Psalms 66:10-12 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.
- **Not all afflictions come directly from God's hand, but He can still use them for your good!**
Lamentations 3:33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.
Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.
- **God needs His seasoned veterans (like Paul) to show His faithfulness to their generation.**
Psalms 71:18 Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.
- **HOW WE ACT DURING OUR AFFLICTIONS HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH THE RESULTS!**
- 1. **WE WASTE AFFLICTIONS BY WHINING, MURMURING & COMPLAINING IN THE PRESENT.**
 - This is the reason every test Israel experienced in the wilderness was wasted on them.
- 2. **WE WASTE AFFLICTIONS WHEN WE DON'T REMEMBER DELIVERANCES IN THE PAST.**
 - When David stood before Goliath, he rehearsed his past victories with the bear and the lion.
- 3. **WE WASTE AFFLICTIONS WHEN WE DON'T SEE GOD'S PURPOSES IN THE FUTURE.**
 - God brings us through so we can teach others, sharing God's faithfulness with them.

- **GOD IS PREPARING YOU TO BE A VETERAN OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE! (Philippians 1:6)**